

Sibling rivalry normal, says pediatrician, 1B



Mill makes choice, 1D

Hills employee helps save a life, 2A

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HOLIDAY watch. Farmington Public Schools officials do not plan to close school for major Jewish holidays, but trustees have vowed to review the matter in the future.

Two parents who wrote a letter suggesting the closings met with the board's policy committee last week to discuss the request.

"The numbers of Jewish students do not warrant setting these days aside right now," said Susan Rennels, committee chair. "We will look at it again in the future."

She explained that the school calendar is negotiated with staff through collective bargaining and that the current calendar already is in place.

SWITCHING roles. Sgt. Dennis Green, a 16-year department veteran, today becomes the Farmington Hills Police representative to the Southeast Michigan Conspiracy Organization, a regional undercover narcotics investigation unit.

He replaces Sgt. John Hedrick, a 22-year department veteran who returns to the Farmington Hills Police Patrol Division after a 2-year stint with Livonia-based SEMCO.

Green formerly worked on the Oakland County Organized Crime Task Force.

Quote of the week

"We get a little angry. We don't want drug addicts. We get a little sick and tired of sex in a car."

— Massie Kurzeja, Olde Town/Meadowbrook Heights Homeowners Association president, about past activity at Waldron Park, Story, IA

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Building Scene

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Traffic noise irks freeway's neighbors

By Joanne Mallizowski staff writer

From his bedroom window, Neil Swiacki can hear rubber tires slapping the pavement and the whoosh of the big trucks as they pass his Camelot Court neighborhood on I-696.

"At 6 a.m. it's definitely louder. Sometimes, it wakes me up," said Swiacki, Camelot Court Homeowners Association board member and past president. "It's noisier now than it was be-

fore. There's more cars on it now."

Richard Conlin is among several Howard Road residents who are "speechless" that the Michigan Department of Transportation has abandoned plans for noise abatement on the south side of I-696, between Halsted and Drake.

Swiacki and Conlin are among about 70 residents who made their feelings, some angry, known to MDOT officials last week about plans for reducing the noise from the eight-

lane freeway, reopened in late fall.

With the comments taken from a public forum in Farmington Hills city hall last week, MDOT officials will review and "fine tune" their proposed noise abatement plans, said Lisa Funk, MDOT transportation planner.

"Truly, we weren't just giving them lip service," Funk said. "We will consider what they said. But we don't know whether it's enough to make major changes."

MDOT PLANS will be reviewed this week

with final plans to be given to the Farmington Hills City Council for review Monday, Feb. 12. Funk said MDOT will work through the city council. No more public hearings are scheduled.

City manager William Costick confirmed the February meeting and said city engineers also will examine the MDOT plans and determine "what the city council should do."

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HANDY BORST/staff photographer

Farmington Hills officials are considering a change in name and makeup for Waldron Park, in the southeast part of the city.

Feud over park's status brewing

By Joanne Mallizowski staff writer

Massie Kurzeja and Carol Boyd want Waldron Park in southeast Farmington Hills to be a neighborhood park where mothers and their children can spend an afternoon. Or where senior Olde Town residents can take a leisurely walk and have a quiet lunch.

The two, however, are convinced those scenes won't be permanent if the park's small parking lot is repaved and "outsiders" are allowed in.

"We get a little angry. We don't want drug addicts. We get a little sick and tired of sex in a car," said Kurzeja, Olde Town/Meadowbrook Heights Homeowners Association president.

But Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Commission members' \$30,000 plans to improve the 2 1/2-acre park, at Waldron and Independence, include taking down the parking lot gate that went up last year at residents' request.

The plan is to restrict five of the nine parking spaces as hand-



"This is a neighborhood park . . . centrally located within the interior of our subdivision. This park was obviously planned as a neighborhood park."

— Massie Kurzeja, Olde Town activist

capped spaces. Leaving only four spaces for regular parking reduces the number of "outsiders" who can use the facility, said Dan Potter, Farmington Hills special services director.

Commissioners said they received complaints from disabled

and elderly residents who cannot walk to the park and want to drive there.

But city councilman Aldo Vagnozzi complained that it's difficult in the parking lot to restrict handicapped parking, which can be accommodated on the nearby streets.

"Are we going to have a constant police officers or Neighborhood Watch there?" he asked.

The parking lot was closed last year at residents' requests as a means of reducing problems. Residents have complained that the parking lot attracts youths who hang out and cause trouble in the park, whose name is expected to be changed to Olde Town Park.

"We have to live with that park. We have to live with the results of it. If you have a car, you have access to Drake Park or Shlawassee Park," Boyd said, adding that Waldron Park was never meant to be like other city parks.

"THIS IS a neighborhood park . . . centrally located within the in-

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Library activist mourned

By Joanne Mallizowski staff writer

Farmington Hills city manager William Costick won't forget Charlotte Yaverski for a lot of reasons. But one — a replica of a carillon tower in brightly colored Lego blocks — sits brightly on his office window sill.

"I'll never forget her for that," said Costick.

Yaverski knew just what Costick wanted, and with a friend, she helped build the next best thing.

"I always appreciated the smile on her face, the warm feeling she gave to others," Costick said.

From the time her death was announced Monday, shocked city officials, admirers and friends talked about Yaverski's easy way with people, her quick smile and her determination to accomplish whatever needed to be done.

"No one knew how sick she was. She always had a smile. She never complained. She always kept on doing things in the community no matter how she was feeling," said Yaverski's friend, Farmington Hills city councilman Jonathan Grant.

KNOWN MOST recently for her work as president of the Farmington Community Library, Yaverski's community involvement was far-reaching, including the Year 2000 future project and the state and local League of Women Voters.

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Officer's standing on hold

By Casey Hahn staff writer

A recently hired court officer at the 47th District Court in Farmington must go through a psychological examination before Oakland County Sheriff John Nichols will consider deputizing him.

According to records obtained under Michigan's Freedom of Information Act, court officer Robert Mitchell's disability retirement from the Farmington Department of Public Safety in 1988 was the reason for the delay.

"A recent disclosure of information regarding a 'severe stress' disability . . . makes it relevant to request that Robert S. Mitchell see a psychologist and/or psychiatrist before further consideration can be made as to your formal request for deputization of Mr. Mitchell," read a Jan. 2, 1990, letter to District Judge Fred Harris that was signed by Ni-

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Hills man dies in accident at Delco plant

By Joe Bauman staff writer

Funeral services were held Wednesday for Eugene Bishop of Farmington Hills, who died Sunday morning from injuries sustained in an industrial accident at the General Motors Delco Products plant on Eckles Road in Livonia.

Bishop, 44, was performing routine maintenance on a crane early last Thursday in the plant's plating operation when the welding on a scaffolding he was using broke loose, causing him to fall 17 feet into a vat of 130-degree liquid nickel.

Plant personnel director Gary Kistemaker said Bishop was able to lift himself out of the vat and walked several hundred feet before other plant employees came to his aid.

"The other workers treated him until emergency medical people arrived at the plant. It was a very unusual and very unfortunate accident."

Bishop was taken to St. Mary Hospital in Livonia, where he died at 8:25 Sunday morning, a family member said.

BISHOP CAME to the Delco plant 27 years ago following his graduation from Farmington High and was employed as a millwright, Kistemaker said.

Bishop is the second employee to die at the Delco plant in the last three weeks. Jason Bickel, a 22-year-old security guard temporarily assigned to the plant, was shot to death Jan. 14 after being dispatched to check an alarm on an open door at about 7 p.m.

Bickel's body was found two hours later by a

maintenance employee. He had been shot once in the head at contact range, according to Livonia police. The Westland man was taken to St. Mary Hospital where he was pronounced dead at 10:45 p.m.

ACCORDING TO Kistemaker, Bishop was the first person to die in an industrial accident at the plant in several years.

"These types of accidents are tragic but they do occur."

Bishop is survived by: wife, Dianne; daughters, Leda and Amy; mother, Estelle Lessor; sisters, Patricia Levos and Velma Anderson; and brothers, Sidney, Glenn and William.

Services were conducted at the Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home in Farmington.